

CLAIMS

I CLAIM:

- 5 1) A method of engaging a plurality of individuals for the provision of service communications to customers, comprising the steps of:
 - a) Providing access to a remote agent network to one or more client users;
 - b) Providing access to the remote agent network to a plurality of remote
10 agents; and
 - c) Enabling the one or more client users by operation of the remote agent network to:
 - i) Recruit one or more remote agents from the plurality of remote
15 agents for selection for a client user dedicated pool from the plurality of remote agents;
 - ii) Select the client user dedicated pool; and
 - iii) Directly manage the provision of service communications by the client user dedicated pool via the remote agent network.
- 20 2) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of providing access to the one or more client users to a labor exchange that enables the one or more client users to:
 - a) Record eligibility requirements for selection of remote agents as part of
the client user dedicated pool;
 - 25 b) Define the contents of forms to be completed by remote agents in order to be eligible for selection as part of the client user dedicated pool; and
 - c) Review the contents of the forms as part of a decision whether or not to select a particular remote agent as part of the client user dedicated
pool.
- 30 3) The method of claim 2, further comprising the steps of:

- a) Soliciting the submission of e-resumes by one or more remote agents in order to be eligible for selection as part of the client user dedicated pool; and
 - b) Comparison of the content of the forms and/or the e-resumes with the eligibility requirements to define a list of potential remote agents for review by the one or more client users.
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- 4) The method of claim 3, comprising the further step of enabling the one or more client users to contact remote agents from the list of potential remote agents to arrange interviews.
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- 5) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of providing secure access to remote agents selected as forming part of the client user dedicated pool to one or more client user call center applications and related client user data in support of the provision of service communications by the dedicated pool of remote agents.
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- 6) The method claimed in claim 1, further comprising the step of enabling the one or more client users to control the remote agent state on a carrier switch.
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- 7) The method claimed in claim 6, further comprising the step of enabling a remote agent to log in to a telephony server and thereby queue to a client user call queue on the carrier switch via a telephony application.
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- 8) The method claimed in claim 7, comprising the further step of authenticating the remote agent before permitting the remote agent to log on to the telephony server.
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- 9) The method claimed in claim 1, further comprising the step of loading computer programming on a client computer associated with a remote agent, the computer programming being configured to create a secure

partition between client data accessed by the remote agent and the hard drive of the client computer.

- 10) The method claimed in claim 1, further comprising the step of providing
5 access to the one or more client users and the client user dedicated pool to a payment utility that enables tracking of service communications completed by the client user dedicated pool, billing of completed service communications to the one or more client users, and payment for
10 completed service communications to members of the client user dedicated pool.
- 11) A system for engaging a plurality of individuals for the provision of service communications to customers of one or more client users, the system comprising:
15 a) A communication platform;
b) A web server linked to the communication platform and adapted to provide a secure connection to a client server, wherein the client server includes one or more call center applications and is linked to a client database including service communication data; and
20 c) A telephony server linked to the communication platform, a carrier switch and the web server, wherein the telephony server and web server cooperate to enable one or more client users to permit access to a dedicated pool of remote agents selected by the one or more client users to access:
25 i) The client server; and
ii) And a call queue from the carrier switch, thereby enabling the dedicated pool of remote agents to take calls from the call queue from one or more remote devices.
- 12) The system as claimed in claim 11, wherein the web server includes a
30 network application that enables the one or more client users to:

- a) Recruit one or more remote agents from the plurality of remote agents for selection for a client user dedicated pool from the plurality of remote agents;
- b) Select the client user dedicated pool; and
- 5 c) Directly manage the provision of service communications by the client user dedicated pool via the remote agent network.

13)The system as claimed in claim 12, wherein the network application enables the configuration of one or more client user work centers and
10 remote agent work centers, wherein the work centers provide access to the one or more client users and to the remote agents respectively to a series of utilities for remote agents providing service communications, and for the one or more client users managing the provision of such service communications by remote agents.

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14)A computer program for operation on a web server linked to a telephony server and a communication platform, the computer program defining a network application that provides instructions for enabling one or more client users to permit access to a dedicated pool of remote agents
20 selected by the one or more client users to access:

- a) a client server that includes one or more call center applications and is linked to a client database including service communication data; and
- b) the telephony server so as to establish a link to a client user call queue from a carrier switch, thereby enabling the dedicated pool of remote
25 agents to take calls from the call queue from one or more remote devices thereby enabling the remote agents to provide service communication services to the one or more client users.

15)A computer program as claimed in claim 14, wherein the network
30 application enables client users to

- a) Recruit one or more remote agents from the plurality of remote agents for selection for a client user dedicated pool from the plurality of remote agents;
- b) Select the client user dedicated pool; and
- 5 c) Directly manage the provision of service communications by the client user dedicated pool via the remote agent network.

16)A computer program as claimed in claim 14, wherein the network application enables the configuration of one or more client user work
10 centers and remote agent work centers, wherein the work centers provide access to client users and remote agents respectively to a series of utilities for remote agents providing service communications, and for the one or more client users managing the provision of such service communications by the remote agents.

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17)A computer program as claimed in claim 16, wherein the network application enables the one or more client users to define a custom interface for provision of service communications by the remote agents.

20 18)A computer program as claimed in claim 17, wherein the network application provides access to client user managers and to the remote agents to a series of collaboration utilities, work scheduling utilities and communication utilities.

25 19)A computer program as claimed in claim 18, wherein the network application includes an intelligent transaction router that is adapted to route client user calls from the carrier switch to the dedicated pool of remote agents based on rules defined by the one or more client users for handling of their service communications, and the logged in status to the
30 communication platform of specific remote agents forming part of the dedicated pool.

20)A computer program as claimed in claim 14, wherein the network application is linked to a billing application that enables tracking of service communications completed by the client user dedicated pool, billing of completed service communications to the one or more client users, and payment for completed service communications to members of the client user dedicated pool.

21)A computer program as claimed in claim 14, wherein the network application includes a database management utility linked to a database, wherein the document management utility enables the creation and management of data including documents used by remote agents in the provision of service communications.

22)A computer program as claimed in claim 14, wherein the network application includes a web emulator for providing operable emulation of client user call center applications to the dedicated pool of remote agents from client computers of such dedicated pool of remote agents.

23)A computer program for operation on a client computer associated with a remote agent selected by one or more client users to form part of a dedicated pool of remote agents for providing service communications to the one or more client users, the computer program defining a client application that provides instructions to the client computer to:

- a) Load into the RAM of the client computer an operating platform;
- b) Establish a secure partition between the client computer hard drive and client user data accessed by the client computer in the provision of service communications; and
- c) Establish IP packet control of the client computer state on a carrier switch.

24)The computer program claimed in claim 23, wherein the client application is adapted to configure the client computer to provide a VPN secure

remote workstation connected to a remote agent network that includes a communication platform, a web server connected to the communication platform, and a telephony server connected to the web server and the communication platform, wherein the remote agent network enables the provision of service communications by the dedicated pool of remote agents.

25) The computer program claimed in claim 24, wherein the client application is adapted to connect the client computer to the remote agent network, thereby establishing a secure connection between the client computer and a client server linked to the client users, the client server including one or more call center applications and related client user data.

26) The computer program claimed in claim 24, wherein the client application further includes an authentication facility for authenticating the remote agent prior to providing access to the client server.

27) The computer program claimed in claim 26, wherein the authentication facility is adapted to interface with a bioauthentication device connected to the client computer so as to verify the identity of the remote agent prior to providing access to the client server.

28) A system comprising:

- a) a client computer associated with a remote agent selected by one or more client users to form part of a dedicated pool of remote agents for providing service communications to the one or more client users; and
- b) a computer program loaded on the client computer, the computer program providing a client application that provides instructions to the client computer to:
 - i) Load into the RAM of the client computer an operating platform;

- ii) Establish a secure partition between the client computer hard drive and client user data accessed by the client computer in the provision of service communications; and
- iii) Establish IP packet control of the client computer state on a carrier switch.

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29)The system as claimed in claim 28, wherein the client application is adapted to configure the client computer to provide a VPN secure remote workstation connected to a remote agent network that includes a communication platform, a web server connected to the communication platform, and a telephony server connected to the web server and the communication platform, wherein the remote agent network enables the provision of service communications by the dedicated pool of remote agents.

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30)The system as claimed in claim 29, wherein the client application is adapted to connect the client computer to the remote agent network, thereby establishing a secure connection between the client computer and a client server linked to the client users, the client server including one or more call center applications and related client user data.

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